

POLICY / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, September 3, 2013

Oliver Administration Building

Present

Subcommittee: William O'Dell, Chair, Diana Campbell and Lynn Wainwright

School Committee, Administration & Guests: Melinda L. Thies, Superintendent; Mario Andrade, Asst. Superintendent; and Eric Dickervitz, Bristol Phoenix (6:43 p.m.),

Meeting called to order by Bill O. at 6:40 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Diana C. motioned to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2013 meeting; Lynn W. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Health & Wellness Policy (JHCG)

Lynn W. requested the following changes to the "Proposed Draft – 1st Half Revisions" document:

District Nutrition Standards

4. Snacks, Beverages and Fundraising

Lynn W. brought up a concern of fundraisers that don't meet Rhode Island Nutrition Guidelines. Diana C. responded those situations are

covered under the exemptions where it states that snacks that do not comply with Rhode Island Guidelines must be conducted outside of school hours away from school premises. Bill O. commented that he is not comfortable with any language concerning fundraisers and would like the policy language to be straightforward. Lynn W. responded that parents need to see verbiage as it is difficult for them to locate the laws. She added that she would like this policy to be user friendly where parents can easily find information. Bill O. feels that there is too much ambiguity in the language concerning snacks. Diana C. responded that the exemption list concerning snacks is taken verbatim from the Rhode Island Law.

There was a consensus to add “during school hours” to the section referring to fundraisers that are compliant with Rhode Island Nutrition Guidelines.

Lynn W. commented that Andrew H. requested replacing the parenthesis around “as amended from time to time” with commas.

Remainder of Health & Wellness Policy (JHCG) Review

Celebration/Events

Melinda T. voiced a concern with “extra recess” under “non-food celebrations”. She stated this is not always possible. Bill O. is concerned that a non-food activity could create scheduling problems for the teacher. Diana C. suggested that schools could come up with

their own list of non-food activities. Melinda T. added that it is important not to get too bogged down with specifics within the policy as different circumstances could prevent enforcement. Diana C. agreed stating that earlier in the policy examples of non-food fundraisers are not delineated.

There was a consensus to remove the entire section which describes “non-food celebrations”.

Student Physical Activity

Bill O. questioned why the policy is addressing discipline issues. Diana C. responded that the thought behind this was in the instance of a student who can't sit still in class, it would be best not to withhold recess as a punishment so the child can burn off excess energy. Bill O. would like to just simply state, “Physical education classes or physical opportunities shall be available for all students.” as he feels the District has trained teachers who can determine the best course of action for their students. Melinda T. asked why so many bullet points outlining physical activity are needed when they are already part of the curriculum. She added that this is not done for any other program. Lynn W. responded that this was recommended by WellSAT. Melinda T. commented that there could be cases where some of these activities are not done in every class. She feels the more specific the details in a policy, the more apt to have to monitor and defend it. Lynn W. feels it is better to include more to showcase that the District is serious about Health and Wellness. Melinda T.

commented that the last bullet point related to sports and academic activities will raise concerns among physical education teachers. Diana C. said this comes across as micro-managing. Melinda T. stated that all age groups do not seem to be covered in the language.

There was a consensus to end the first bullet point at “discretion of the administration”, and to remove the last seven bullet points under “Physical Activity”

NASPE

Mario A. commented that the NASPE recommendations are different from the Rhode Island Guidelines or what is currently being done at the schools. He added that it is important to be careful that what we are stating within the policy is enforceable; the shorter the sweeter. Bill O. asked where the NASPE Guidelines can be found. He added that a link to these guidelines could be inserted into the policy. Bill O. commented that he would prefer to remove all six bullets under the NASPE recommendations. Melinda T. questioned whether or not the School Committee actually does endorse the NASPE Guidelines. Mario A. commented that “endorse” is a strong word indicating that the NASPE Guidelines would have to be followed concerning time requirements which may not be possible in all situations. He believes it can be encouraged as a best practice instead. Diana C. commented that she has a concern with the fourth bullet where it states “extended periods of inactivity are discouraged” in the instance of NECAP testing. Diana C. also commented that she is not sure how

the first bullet could be accomplished as there is no way to track a student's activity time.

There was a consensus to change “endorses” to “encourages” and to remove the bullet point referring to extended periods of inactivity. There was also a consensus to keep the remaining bullet points for now and to let the full Committee decide. Bill O. would ultimately like to see this section simply state, “The Health and Wellness Subcommittee encourages use of the Current Guidelines from the National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE) for physical activities” as specific bulleted details are not necessary.

Staff Wellness

Diana C. stated that the rationale for including this section was to provide encouragement to the School Committee by listing the benefits for improved health and morale of the staff.

There was a consensus to remove the last two bullet points under “Staff Wellness”.

Measurement and Evaluation

Melinda T. asked how the Health and Wellness Subcommittee would be able to regularly review the District's adherence to the policy. Diana C. responded that there are Health and Wellness liaisons in place at the different schools who give feedback. Diana C. asked if the goal of this is to give a report card to the public on how we are

doing concerning health and wellness. Lynn W. responded, “yes”. Melinda T. commented that although the Health and Wellness Subcommittee will do the annual review, the policy will still ultimately come back to the Policy Subcommittee yearly if there are changes recommended. Diana C. responded that it is the Health and Wellness Subcommittee’s job to review health and wellness throughout the year. Melinda T. commented that the Policy Subcommittee needs to be prepared that this policy will come back to them every year. Mario A. asked if there was manpower to complete this task. Melinda T. asked whether there will be a tool used to assess or will it be anecdotal. Lynn W. responded that the District’s website should have the Health and Wellness Policy easily accessible to the public where the annual review could be posted as well with highlights. Melinda T. commented that she liked the idea of doing this review in the form of a celebration rather than in a more negative format. Lynn W. stated that these highlights could be presented to the public through the press, School Committee Meetings, etc.

There was a consensus to remove the first bullet point, and remove the word “annually” from the last bullet point. An additional final bullet point will read as follows: The Bristol Warren Health and Wellness Subcommittee will regularly review and evaluate the District’s Health and Wellness policy and all the District’s schools’ adherence to its components and may make recommendations to the School Committee annually or as needed.”

MOTION: Diana C. made a motion to move the Health and Wellness Policy (JHCG) to the Full Committee for a 1st Reading; seconded by Bill O.

DISCUSSION: Bill O. stated that as Chair he can place a vote when a consensus is required to move forward. He added that he is not one to just move a policy forward for the sake of doing so as that is not a valid reason. He continued stating that he is not comfortable with the current policy draft believing it is too cumbersome. Bill O. believes that the policy can be effective with limited language.

The motion passed with a 2-1 vote; Bill O. opposed.

School Committee Officers Duties (BCB)

Paul S. had requested that the Policy Subcommittee address his concern related to the language for Chairperson's duties where it states that the Chair will "ensure the proper implementation of Policy BBAA". The Policy Subcommittee Chair asked the School Committee secretary to wordsmith reflecting the desires of the School Committee Chairperson. Diana C. suggested replacing the word "ensure" with "inform" and to state that the Chairperson will provide a copy of the policy to the School Committee member.

Bill O. stated this policy will go on to the School Committee for a Second Reading.

Policy Review List

Lynn W. asked why the Cheating Policy was not on the agenda. Bill O. responded that the high school administrative team would be presenting their findings to the Policy Subcommittee in October. Lynn W. would have liked to discuss as a Subcommittee prior to that.

Future Agenda Items

- Student Dress Code**
- Cheating Policy**
- Student Code of Discipline**
- New Policy Development – Administrative Procedure Discussion (carry over from today to allow all School Committee members opportunity to be present)**
- Academic Eligibility (carry over from today to allow all School Committee members opportunity to be present)**
- Policy Review List**

Next meeting will be held on October 7, 2013.

Adjournment

MOTION: At 8:10 pm Diana C. motioned to adjourn; Lynn W. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

/kd